

(not shown) can be guided or steered to the missile 10 thereby destroying the missile 10 before it reaches the target 12.

[0041] In the preferred embodiment, current from the photodiode 36 represents an analog signal. A signal conditioner 44 transforms the current from the photodiode 36 into a digital signal, which is transmitted to the processor 42. More specifically, the signal conditioner 44 includes an amplifier 46 for amplifying the analog current and an analog-to-digital converter 48 for converting the analog current to the digital signal. The processor 42 then determines the quantity of photons 40 impinging the photodiode 36 as a function of the digital signal.

[0042] The invention has been described with reference to the preferred embodiment. Obviously, modifications and alterations will occur to others upon reading and understanding the preceding detailed description. It is intended that the invention be construed as including all such modifications and alterations insofar as they come within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.